

Asheville City Council
Planning and Economic Development Committee

2:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m., July 19, 2006
Economic Development Office Conference Room

DRAFT
Minutes

Present: Councilman Jan Davis, Chair; Vice Mayor Holly Jones; Councilwoman Robin Cape. Staff members Gary Jackson; Scott Shuford; Shannon Tuch, Samuel Powers and Robert Griffin.

The Planning and Economic Development Committee met on July 19, 2006 at 29 Haywood Street at 2:00 p.m. The meeting was called to order by Chair Jan Davis.

1. Approval of Minutes

A motion to approve the minutes of the June 14, 2006 Committee was made by Councilwoman Cape and seconded by Vice Mayor Jones. The vote was unanimous.

2. Staff Report - Dimensional Nonconformities

Scott Shuford presented the staff report. The report suggests allowing buildings to remain so long as they are substantially retained in their current configuration. Council Members Cape and Davis asked Robert Griffin to explain how significant renovations trigger building code standards for earthquakes. He replied that major demolition would require full compliance. Scott Shuford accepted direction to find a middle ground for key conditions to be met, but not all. All Committee Members favored the recommendation. Vice Mayor Jones called for a strong public education program with benefits to changes.

3. Updates and Status Reports

Process Improvement Initiatives - Robert Griffin summarized the improvements listed in the attachment. Chairman Davis asked about customer service in plan review for a building plan in The Ramble. Councilwoman Cape suggested Committee personnel know where services are delivered. All Committee Members commended the progress made over the past six months.

4. New Business

- a. Staff Report - UDO Amendments - Scott Shuford explained how "Floor Area Ratio" would work in promoting favorable design in suburban areas. The Committee directed staff to provide examples at the next meeting.
- b. Staff Report - Adaptive Reuse Overlay District - Scott Shuford explained how a new overlay zoning district for adaptive reuse would allow residentially-zoned property to be used for a wider range of uses, provided the uses were in existing buildings. The Committee fully supported the concept.
- c. Staff Report - Review Exemptions and Threshold Adjustments - In terms of procedural relief, Scott Shuford described how Level III thresholds could be increased for CBD and historic districts. Vice Mayor Jones asked for feedback from developers on whether this would promote housing and transit goals.

5. Public Comment

No citizen comments were offered.

6. Closed Session

At 3:30 p.m., Councilwoman Cape made a motion to go into closed session for the following reason: to discuss economic development opportunities. This motion was seconded by Vice Mayor Jones and carried unanimously.

At 3:55 p.m., Councilwoman Cape moved to come out of closed session. This motion was seconded by Chairman Davis and carried unanimously.

7. Other Business

Councilwoman Cape asked the Committee to support a feasibility study of investment in land conservation above Memorial Park. Vice Mayor Jones asked about the status of the incorporation by the advocates. Staff was directed to provide information on land acquisition funds.

Vice Mayor Jones asked if the development of the former Merrimon Avenue Burger King site is proceeding according to plan. Scott Shuford responded that it was.

Vice Mayor Jones asked about Mr. Shuford's expectations for the Merrimon Avenue Corridor site. He responded that there continues to be support for the plan.

Vice Mayor Jones asked about the status of the annexation plan. Scott Shuford said the annexation plan is being developed for implementation in early 2007.

At 4:15 p.m. Vice Mayor Jones made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Chairman Davis and carried unanimously. The regular meeting was adjourned at 4:15 p.m.